

**UNITED STATES POLICY
ON
INTERNAL DEFENSE
IN SELECTED FOREIGN COUNTRIES**



Approved by the Senior Interdepartmental Group

May 23, 1968

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State Department review
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I. PURPOSE AND AUTHORITIES

This policy (short title "Foreign Internal Defense Policy") supersedes "United States Overseas Internal Defense Policy (USOIDP)" issued under cover of National Security Action Memorandum (NSAM) No. 182 of August 24, 1962. It is consistent with NSAMs 182, 119, 124, 162, 173, 177, 283, and 341. Its provisions govern the foreign internal defense policies, plans, programs, and operations of all U.S. government Departments and Agencies concerned. The appropriate Departments and Agencies should update statements of their roles and missions in support of this policy to replace those set forth in the superseded 1962 policy paper. The new statements should be submitted to the Senior Interdepartmental Group for approval. Departments and Agencies should also issue implementing directives as necessary.

II. POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

A. The Problem

Internal security situations in certain developing countries are a matter of concern for the United States. Because of location or economic resources, the need for U.S. military or other facilities and operating rights (such as transit rights), political alignments, or for other reasons, the United States must pay special attention to these countries and to the ability of their governments to maintain internal order. In certain circumstances, the United States may have to provide governments with assistance for internal defense purposes in order to help protect United States local and strategic interests which might be threatened by internal disorder or subversion. Subversion involves systematic efforts from internal or external

SECRET

SECRET

2

sources to undermine or overthrow the established political and social order. Internal defense consists of the full range of action programs to maintain internal security, including, in addition to political and diplomatic activity and economic and military assistance, such specialized programs as civil police, psychological, paramilitary, and counter-insurgency operations; counter guerrilla activity, unconventional warfare, military civic actions, and public works.

In some developing countries, independence from significant influence or control by a foreign power may be a major U.S. security objective for political, military, or economic reasons. Such control or influence could result from communist subversion or from communist exploitation of local failure to maintain adequate internal security.

The United States must, therefore, be constantly alert to conditions of internal security in developing countries in order to identify situations where subversion, insurgency, or disorder endanger significant U.S. interests. In these cases, the United States must be prepared to assist governments in appropriate internal defense programs.

B. The U.S. Position

It is a part of our overall foreign policy that ultimately nations be able to develop according to their own traditions and that each be governed in accordance with the will of the majority of its citizens. We believe that governments should respond adequately to the aspirations of the people for political, economic, and social conditions appropriate to their environment, and should move toward the establishment of institutions which will provide some guarantees for the continuation of these conditions as governments change. The development of institutions responsive to local national patterns of behavior is more important, however, than progress toward an objective goal of representative democratic institutions as the United States has traditionally viewed them. In many cases, it is primarily the economic and technical aspects of modernization which are attractive goals in developing countries, and there is often great resistance to changes in political and social systems, no matter how important or appropriate these changes may seem to us.

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SECRET

3

The process of modernization in developing countries is often destabilizing in itself, and changes in political and social systems often are accomplished by revolutionary activity. While the United States would usually prefer basic changes in a society to be evolutionary rather than revolutionary, the growth process is generally accompanied by unrest, upheaval, and violence. In U.S. policies toward foreign internal security situations, it is important to make a distinction between disorder and insurgency which may be a function of national growth and that which is a result of subversion.

Thus, the position which the United States should take with respect to the internal security situation in a foreign country is an integral, inseparable part of the overall U.S. policy toward the country and the region in which it is located. It cannot be formulated in isolation from other aspects of U.S. policy nor implemented as a separate program. The policy problem is to make judgments about the nature and speed of the process of national development and, where U.S. interests require it, to find ways to influence the process constructively.

The United States does not regard every situation of political instability or social disorder and violence as a foreign internal security problem threatening U.S. interests and requiring U.S. assistance for internal defense programs. In some cases, the forces making for instability and political upheaval may contribute, in the long run, to the achievement of objectives deserving of encouragement and support from the United States. In any case, it does not seem possible entirely to deprive people of the use of force for purposes of social change, and action which is too repressive may worsen the problem by forcing the pressures for alterations in institutions outside legal or acceptable channels and into subversive forms.

In countries where significant U.S. interests are not threatened by internal disorder or subversion, the United States should seek to avoid becoming involved in internal defense policies, plans, and operations of local governments. Even in these cases, however, it may be in the U.S. interest to provide internal defense equipment or training assistance appropriate to the situation and to U.S. objectives in the countries concerned.

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SECRET

4

Internal defense policy and programs for countries the United States may be prepared to assist will need to be determined on a case-by-case basis and carefully tailored to the specific and unique aspects of each situation. Important considerations which will affect the determination of the kind and nature of U.S. internal defense policy and programs for particular countries are: first, U.S. interests in the area; then the sources, kinds, and degree of threat to internal security; dangers from external exploitation; the possibility of local conflict broadening into larger-scale wars; the consequences of the internal security problem for overall development within the country; the will and ability of the local government to handle the situation with indigenous resources; the effect of U.S. programs on other programs within the country; the consequences of U.S. policies and programs on the U.S. position in other countries; the availability of external assistance from other nations or international organizations.

One of our primary concerns is to anticipate situations requiring U.S. foreign internal defense action far enough in advance, and to devise, in cooperation with local governments, effective programs which will make unnecessary the engagement of U.S. combat troops. The long-term implications of use of U.S. military forces should be carefully studied in any consideration of such a step.

C. The Importance of Local Efforts

The process of change within a country is largely stimulated by local initiative, guided by national leaders, reliant on indigenous resources, and ultimately bears a national trademark. The role of internal defense is to permit the changes to take place in as orderly a manner as possible and without outside interference. The kind and amount of police and military action required to maintain internal security for each country are most likely also to be determined according to the character of the government and the people and the requirements for such force as seen by them. It is clear that the United States should persuade the countries concerned to do as much as they can for their own internal defense. We should realize, however, that many resource-poor countries are unable to attain their goals for political and economic modernization or their objectives of improved conditions of law and order

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SECRET

5

without external help. Where U.S. interests warrant it and U.S. resources can be made available, the United States can provide such assistance or, in combination with other nations which share our common goals, see that it is provided.

D. U.S. Actions

The nature of the U.S. response toward foreign internal security situations may be a selection from or mix of the following policy options:

- non-involvement
- diplomatic persuasion, either bilateral or through regional groupings, and advice (including efforts to influence opposition groups or leaders where appropriate)
- special technical, economic, public information, civil security, police or military assistance to include operational assistance for internal defense programs and psychological operations
- assistance as a means of inducing policies designed to counter underlying causes of internal security problems
- boycott of a government through denial of normal diplomatic or economic relations
- use of military force to assist in restoring or maintaining internal order

It will always be necessary for responsible U.S. officials both in Washington and in the field to make judgments, in individual country situations, concerning the character of U.S. action and the degree of U.S. assistance which may be desirable (from the U.S. point of view or the country's own standpoint) or tolerable or effective or available. Judgments of the appropriateness of political, military, economic, and psychological activities must be applied on a continuing basis as the situation in a country changes or develops.

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6

Political development programs to provide for improved communication between the population at large and the central government can strengthen nations vulnerable to subversion and unrest. Encouragement of increasing popular involvement and wider participation in indigenous private and government institutions can induce people to seek desired social and economic opportunities and reforms through overt legal means rather than through subversion and violence. Such institutions as local development committees, regional councils, and rural production and marketing cooperatives may act as effective vehicles for participation in local and national development programs leading to the evolution of self-reliant societies resistant to subversion and insurgency. Legal development and public administration programs also may contribute to the achievement of this goal.

Effective police and public safety activities can play an important part in the prevention and handling of internal security problems. A capable and humane police force can be invaluable in coping with and controlling internal security situations at minimum cost with limited use of force and within the framework of civil law. It can be a factor in preventing dissension and dissatisfaction from growing outside the bounds of legitimate opposition and becoming subversion. In developing countries, U.S. police assistance programs can play an important role, not only in the preservation of public order, but in the building of indigenous civil security institutions which can keep pace with and assist in the nation's growth process. The effectiveness of public safety forces can be greatly enhanced if programs for their development are instituted in advance of potential crises. Such programs may be justified also to keep developing countries from obtaining police assistance from Communist or other countries hostile to the United States. Among the responsibilities which the indigenous security agencies can be brought to assume are the protection of broadening freedoms and the prevention of crime and terror which jeopardize the freedoms and interfere with national development. Public information programs can facilitate public acceptance of this role for the police.

The armed forces of a developing country can constitute the means for protection against internal insurrection beyond the

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SECRET

7

capability of civilian police to control. The existence of loyal, appropriately trained, and effective military forces can represent an important deterrent against terrorism or guerrilla warfare and is an important element in internal defense planning. In addition, in many countries, the military establishment possesses equipment and skills representing a major national investment and resource. Frequently the United States can influence governments to use this resource in the nation building process without detracting from the capability of the military to perform its primary defense function.

Students, other youth groups, and labor are often prime target groups for local programs. The United States may be of assistance through these groups in promoting social progress in the developing society. Opportunities may also exist for influencing opposition leaders where Communist or other adverse influences seem likely to prove too disruptive.

Information activities, both person-to-person contact and mass media can play a significant part in the communication process by creating a favorable climate for change and self-help and providing facts and focus for political dialogue.

There may occasionally be opportunities for the resources of U.S. business firms and philanthropic foundations to be applied in support of U.S. objectives. Many private U.S. firms and foundations engage in programs to improve social and economic conditions in countries abroad and can usefully be encouraged to provide assistance and to adopt employment practices which will identify them with popular improvements and aspirations in support of U.S. goals.

Considerations affecting the level of U.S. assistance when provided, include the availability of U.S. and indigenous official and private resources, the financial and manpower impact of U.S. assistance on local governments, and opportunities to obtain assistance from third countries or international organizations.

The choice of U.S. programs and the determination of levels will also be influenced by the degree of identification with

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SECRET

8

the local government we are willing to accept. In most cases, we will want to do everything possible to see that critical sectors of the local society understand the role that the United States is seeking to play. Psychological operations and information programs can assist in achieving this goal.

E. Implementation of the Policy

For the United States to act promptly and effectively when required by U.S. interests in connection with foreign internal defense problems, the responsible Departments and Agencies must be well informed about countries and regions where internal security problems exist or may arise. Intelligence and other information must be constantly available to allow policy makers and operators to anticipate contingencies. Planning, development, and coordination of programs and operations must take place in advance to ensure that necessary internal defense activities are provided for and will be supported from U.S. resources. The Senior Interdepartmental Group and the Interdepartmental Regional Groups, established by NSAM 341, March 2, 1966, are the mechanisms by which interdepartmental activities overseas are directed, coordinated, and supervised by the Secretary of State. Foreign internal defense activities explicitly fall within the scope of this NSAM. In the field, the Chief of the U.S. Diplomatic Mission, assisted by representatives of other agencies, has responsibility for plans and programs concerning foreign internal defense.

III. COURSES OF ACTION

To support this policy, the United States should, through the SIG-IRG mechanism established by NSAM 341 of March 2, 1966,

- A. identify and establish priorities for countries in which an internal security situation represents a threat to significant U.S. interests and where U.S. internal defense assistance would be desirable and feasible; keep the list of such countries and their priorities under constant review;
- B. develop a comprehensive plan to provide U.S. internal defense assistance to each country identified under A. above; the plan may be a separate internal defense plan or part of a more comprehensive country plan; in either case it should

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9

1. be prepared, according to format, timing, and other guidelines established by the Senior Interdepartmental Group and the relevant Regional Interdepartmental Group,
 2. be, under normal circumstances, the responsibility of the Chief of the U.S. Diplomatic Mission in the country concerned,
 3. integrate internal defense with other U.S. foreign affairs programs and activities,
 4. take into account the capabilities of political advice, diplomatic persuasion, public information programs, public safety operations, civic action programs, other economic and military assistance, and psychological, counterinsurgency, countersubversive, unconventional warfare, and other appropriate operations to contribute to internal defense,
 5. focus on improving the capabilities of the country itself -- its leaders, its government, and its people -- to strengthen its own internal security, using U.S. programs and resources in supporting roles,
 6. discuss in detail the funds required for implementation and those available from existing resources, along with a recommendation as to sources of additional funds required, U.S. or local,
 7. be coordinated interdepartmentally,
 8. be subject to critical review, along with operations under it, and periodic updating.
- C. provide for, in the plans referred to in B. above maximum possible emphasis on the development by each country concerned of its own capability to anticipate, prevent, and defeat subversion or insurgency; when external assistance is necessary, the United States should urge other resource-abundant nations to provide help and

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10

should, insofar as feasible, work through international and multilateral institutions;

- D. prepare and coordinate interagency contingency studies for the possible use of U.S. military forces in situations where the U.S. national security interest is threatened by subversion, insurgency, or disorder in foreign countries;
- E. maintain and strengthen intelligence and other reporting procedures where necessary to enable responsible U.S. officials to anticipate and to follow closely foreign internal defense situations of interest to the United States;
- F. maintain and strengthen training programs where necessary to ensure that selected personnel may be able to carry out effectively all of the functions referred to above, both in the field and in Washington.

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